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ANDRE EGLEVSKY

an informal interview

This is the tenth in a series of interviews with famous choreographers and dancers from the realm of dance. The following interview with Andre Eglevsky was held back stage at the War Memorial Opera House during his appearance in San Francisco with the New York City Ballet during August of 1955.

(The Second of Two Parts)

Q. Mr. Eglevsky, do you have any definite ideas as to when a male dancer ought to cease dancing professionally?

A. It should be according to his abilities. For instance, Massine is over fifty and he is still dancing. It is very hard to say definitely when one should quit. Of course when you are a classical dancer it's harder. I would say, roughly, about forty-five is the age when a man should think of retiring.

Q. When the time comes that you retire from the stage, what do you plan to do?

A. Teach. Having had a very good tradition in dancing I feel I should pass it on to others. Before the revolution Russia had two wonderful schools. One in Moscow, the other in Leningrad. One school was more primitive, but basically wonderful. The other school, which needs no introduction, developed such dancers as Nijinsky, Pavlova, Fokine, Balanchine and the cream of Russian dancers. Fortunately enough, I studied at both schools. I studied with Volinine and Legat, as I have told you. Inasmuch as I have the knowledge from these wonderful schools I feel it my duty to pass this on — and, after all, what else can I do?

Q. Is it true that your father was a chef in Paris, France, and that he now follows the trade here in America?

A. No. My father was a military man in Russia. He was a Cossack in the army. You know those wild horsemen? Well, he was one. Of course, he wasn't too wild; he lived in the city. He was an officer when the revolution came and he found himself absolutely jobless. He got himself a job as a dishwasher in Paris. In about 1920 he immigrated to the United States, where he got a job in a restaurant. Eventually he owned his own restaurant. That is how he became known as a chef, but only here in the United States. →

Q. I see. Does he still operate his restaurant?

A. No. He's retired now and lives in Washington, D. C.

Q. What are some of the dance mediums in which you have performed?

A. I have danced in a few pictures. One of the last was of the last was the Chaplin picture, "Lime Light," with Melissa Hayden. I have also danced at the Roxy and Radio City Music Hall which, incidentally, was very difficult. Four or five shows a day is very hard. I wouldn't suggest that any dancer try it. I also did musical comedy. I even had lines to sing. I've also done stadium performances and concerts. But I have never danced in a night club, although I have been asked to dance a pas de deux from the "Nutcracker," in Las Vegas, and for quite a sum, which of course is very tempting.

Q. I was amused when you said you wouldn't advise any dancer to take a job at the Roxy Theatre. Don't you work twice as hard in a ballet company?

A. Well, it's a different story. You see we exercise in the morning. We rehearse, but we can mark it. We don't actually have to do it complete. Now at the Roxy, which was killing, I would have to warm up four times a day and perform four times a day, which of course is hard on the muscles.

Q. Which medium do you find the most satisfactory — that is, artistically?

A. The ballet company, of course.

Q. How about financially?

A. Ballet companies are the worst. They just cannot afford to pay much. One of the reasons is that our productions cost so much. A good production of a ballet may cost forty or fifty thousand dollars. By far the most gratifying financially are motion pictures and night clubs.

Q. Mr. Eglevsky, just how important is the sex appeal element in relationship to ballet's popularity?

A. This is something which we hate. Of course the general public will always follow a pretty girl. But we feel that above all, it is the ballet that one must like and not just a good looking girl. In fact, a true lover of the ballet will enjoy a dancer whether she or he is fat, ugly, thin, big or small. For example, one of the most beloved dancers in Russia is Madame Preobrajenska who is small, not too good looking, and is slightly bent, yet she was always beloved by the public in Russia, and during her performing years there were many

Andre Eglevsky —Bill Cogan

attractive dancers such as Pavlova, Karsavina and others, so that it wasn't because the public had no choice in dancers — they did. It was simpy that they enjoyed her dancing. I feel that this is as it should be. Of course, when a ballerina is good looking, that is nice, too.

Q. Could it be that the press agents, in order to interest a larger public in the ballet, have ocasionally gone overboard in exploiting the sex angle of the ballet?

A. Perhaps that is so. For example, in 1933 or '34 when we first came to the United States with the Ballet Russe, Mr. Hurok wanted to make money on the company, which, of course, is necesary, so his press agents went to work to build up names overnight. Of course they picked the prettiest girls and began building a name around them which was so much easier. A good looking girl, a few nice pictures, and she would be on the covers of some magazines. And that is actually how it started. That's all right, but the public should have enough taste to realize that ballet should be admired for the dancing.

Q. It's like good music?

A. Certainly. You don't care how Mr. Rubinstein looks, it's how well he plays that counts.

Q. On the lighter side, Mr. Eglevsky, what is the most unusual onstage experience you have encountered in your long career?

A. It's very hard to say offhand. There are always a number of unusual cases such as the time I was dancing in Paris and the audience was laughing all the time and I didn't know what was going on. I was doing a pas de deux with Rosella

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Hightower and I discovered there was a cat sitting on stage. Another time when we danced in Naples, Italy, the theatre was filled with cats again. They kept them there to destroy the rats. Before the performance started they called the director over and said, 'What about these cats?' and he said, 'Oh, don't worry, they're well trained and they do not go on stage during the performance. So we went on with a most serious ballet and just as we had feared the cats paraded back and forth during the whole performance.

Q. Do you have a word of advice to offer young boys who might be undecided as to whether or not they should take up the study of ballet dancing?

A. One of the things I always resent is that parents, here in the United States seem to think that the most important thing to do is to let the child decide for himself what he wishes to do. Well, I'll tell you, it is absolutely wrong. In the ballet world you must begin dancing before you have developed your mind. A child of eight or nine surely doesn't know what he wants to do. I have children of my own and they change their ambitions almost every day. So how can you ask a child what he wants to become? Another thing: by nature, a boy is against ballet. The average boy usually wants to skin dive, fly to the moon, or become a racer, but not a ballet dancer. Yet, it is a lovely art and there is absolutely nothing wrong with it. If a child begins training at an early age and is taken care of by his parents he will be brought up in the ballet world do become a wonderful dancer and a perfectly normal person. That is why I say, start early and give the child a good chance to work at ballet at least until he's about 16 or 18, and then let him make his choice. It will be too late for him to make up his mind then.

Q. Finally, what are your immediate professional plans?

A. Well, I recently received a wire from Balanchine asking me to return to New York, where he is preparing a new ballet for me . . . so it looks as though my Las Vegas debut will have to wait.

✪ ✪

The

ACADEMY OF BALLET

• by J. MARKS

Dance performance is a magnificent demon; something sought desperately for a long while and, when attained, something which is at times the most difficult occupation in the world. Fortunately the will to dance persists, and in every city we discover young dancers and young dance companies exerting that traditional and inspired effort towards lofty aims.

Such a young and inspired ballet company has been the goal of San Francisco's renowned school of the dance, **The Academy of Ballet.** Founded by Guillermo del Oro in February of 1951, this organization has for four years slowly formulated the policy and educated the dancers for a ballet company which could become an irreplaceable asset to the culture of San Francisco.

But new companies don't spring full-grown from choreographers' heads. And Guillermo del Oro is the first to announce this depressing fact. For those of us deeply dedicated to dance, it seems either impossible that it has anything whatsoever to do with high finance, or unlikely that it cannot be regarded as a lucrative profession. The fact is, that dance in America has yet to win a sufficient and consistent following to insure its abiding existence in the theatre and to support its dancers and directors. As theatrical producers always say: "No following, no financing." And so, while drama in big and little theatres all over the world fill a multiplicity of coffers, ballet centers itself in a few major companies and lapses into a deep silence elsewhere.

It is against such circumstances that dreams such as Mr. Del Oro's must exert themselves. Obviously, one must be quite a dreamer to persist in the fact of such odds. It is apparent that a great deal of Guillermo del Oro's energetic confidence and ceaseless efforts towards his goals have much to do with his background as a dancer.

Receiving his first training with Maestro Jose Otero-Aranda in Seville, he became a student of Maestro Enrico Cecchetti and has for many years advocated the Cecchetti System. As a dancer, Mr. Del Oro's engagements were with the Paris Opera and the San Francisco Opera Company under Adolph Bolm. As soloist he appeared

→

Guillermo del Oro poses with a class potential ballerinas. Starting at the back Jackie Hearn, Jeannie Beard, Lynette Alaine, Carol Dampier, Susan Perry, Tricia Yabroff, Jenean Morrison, Katy Conrad, and Hildur Mahl. —Bill Cogan

with leading ballet companies in Paris, Covent Garden, London, Colon, Buenos Aires and Rio de Janeiro. And as a teacher, Guillermo del Oro has distinguished himself, winning the respect of dance educators the world over. Some of his prize pupils include New York City Ballet's Janice Mitoff and Roland Vazques as well as Vadja del Oro of the Vincente Escudero Company. A further testimonial in regard to his splendid assistance to the dancer is to be found in the many dancers from such companies as the Festival Ballet, Ballet Russe and Ballet Theatre who have come to him for advanced instruction. Possessing such distinction of origin and experience, it is indeed little wonder that Mr. del Oro has consistently attempted to perpetuate his dream of a ballet company.

However, two dreamers are sometimes better than one; and this second party in the case is dancer-writer-choreographer Carolyn Parks. Mrs. Parks joined del Oro and the Academy in September of 1954, and since that time a veritable new era has commenced at the Academy. Primarily Mrs. Parks has lent an individual approach both to choreography and dance education which excellently complement the methods of Mr. del Oro. Arriving in the ballet world with a totally different background from del Oro, Mrs. Parks has been equipped to help in the expansion of the entire framework of the Academy.

Originally trained by Lillian Cushing in Denver and later studying with Egorova and Volinine in Pairs and Legat in London, she was prize ballerina of her own European Company. Along with this professional experience, her purely academic scholarship in the dance has aided her work at the Academy of Ballet. Her book, **"An Academic Approach to Ballet,"** is read throughout the English - speaking world and has won for her a reputation as a sensitive and expert instructor.

In the environment at the Acad-

emy of Ballet, inspired and perpetuated by Guillermo del Oro and Carolyn Parks, a vast number of students have devotedly worked towards the aims of an **Academy Ballet Company.** Assisting in the education of these young dancers have been numerous internationally respected performers such as Harijis Plucis, Anton Dolin, John Gilpin, John Kriss and Frederick Franklin. Most recently Miss Ailne Phillips, balletmistress for the Sadler's Wells Ballet, has served as guest teacher. With training such as this and with such noteworthy examples, the Academy students have developed into young dancers with great professional potentials, clearly setting the stage for the emergence of the Ballet Company of the Academy.

As yet, only invitational and semi-public try-out performances have been attempted. Fundamentally the impulse for this new performing group is founded upon the desperate need of young dancers for a stage upon which to perform. At present the company is small in number, for only those who are soon to venture into the professional field are allowed to enter the group. And this disinclination to show student talent is one of the major virtues of the artistic policy of the Academy of Ballet. Beyond this, the directors of the company have apparently sought to avoid the war-horses of ballet and to choreograph basic works of adequate originality in their place, thus aiming towards a basic but original repertory.

In the future the aim, we shall hope, will lend itself to the distinctive work which other young ballet companies have been providing the present generation. It seems that such a procedure of originality should be the one selected for the future of this ballet company, for its efforts of the recent past have displayed the eagerness and willingness to seek the cooperation of composers and artists in the realization of new ballets. For this alone, one must give tribute to the Academy, knowing the stresses and difficulties involved in deliberately avoiding the accessibility of all that is too traditional in the

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repertoires of similar new companies of ballet dancers.

Meanwhile, to provide expression for growing students and to give them the opportunity to grow as performing artists, the Academy has inaugurated the idea of a Ballet Workshop. Here, with the assistance of Theodore Beimess, the Academy's musical director, and, of course, Mr. del Oro and Mrs. Parks, students are fulfilling their formative expression as potential performers and choreographers. From this Workshop will come the native talents which will soon populate the company of the Academy of Ballet.

It is altogether exciting and encouraging to realize that such dreams as these, guarded and perpetuated by Guillermo del Oro and Carolyn Parks, can face the hazardous circumstances of professional ballet-making and succeed in promising another ballet company on the West Coast and in San Francisco which will speak with finesse and imagination to a population gradually learning how very pleasant an evening of dance can be.

Maestro del Oro coaches Eva Schoenberg, Barbara Stanbro and instructress Ilona de Herrera on the fine points of Spanish dancing. —Bill Cogan

THE DANCE IN NEW YORK
R. Hasoutra

The National Ballet of Canada gave three performances at the Brooklyn Academy of Music featuring Celia Franca, David Adams, Lois Smith and a company of thirty - four dancers. They are young, well - trained, beautifully costumed and so full of youthful elan that it is a joy to see them. In Anthony Todd's OFFENBACH IN THE UNDERWORLD, they reached a pitch of hilarious fun and spectacular dancing such as I've never seen. And COPPELIA with Celia Franca as Swanhilde, was as fresh and spontaneous as if they had just whipped it up and were having fun doing it.

Lois Smith and David Adams fared very well in LES SYLPHIDES which was pleasing if not brilliant. But as Odette, Lois Smith was exquisite in a particularly beautiful production of SWAN LAKE. Four little Canadian Cygnets nearly danced off with the show.

Tudor's DARK ELEGIES, set to a group of songs sung by Jan Simons, is a dance of mourning for dead children. Some movements had plastic beauty but depth and power were lacking. However, in the fifth song, Roy Moller did some of the most brilliant dancing of the evening. His force in charcterization and power of projection are outstanding.

Much credit goes to Celia Franca who, as well as being an excellent prima ballerina, is also the Artistic Director, for it is due to the perfection of the whole production that the Canadian Ballet is a great success. Every detail is neat, clean, perfect and into this frame the young Canadians poured joyous energy and sound technique. Their return engagement in New York, promised for late Spring,, is eagerly awaited.

☆ ☆ The Brooklyn Academy of Music has been particularly active in the Dance this season. Anna Sokolov presented a program of two works, one old and one new, danced by the Theater Dance Group. ROOMS, first seen here last Spring, is a vital, important work set to music by Kenyon Hopkins who conducted. It is a powerful statement of the loneliness which engulfs each human heart and the various ways we choose to endure or escape. Alvin Ailey in PANIC was a torrent of horror, amazingly wonderful. Beatrice Seckler's heart breaking confusion in ESCAPE, Jay Duncan's hopeless wool-gathering on DREAMS and Jock Moore's compulsive, pitiful rushing-about in GOING were deeply moving creations, excellently done. And in the end, as in the beginning, each in his ROOM alone.

POEM, the new work in six parts, set to music by Scriabin, has moments of lyric beauty and fine musical phrasing. The movements show good invention and build into smooth cre-

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Celia Franca and Marcel Chojnacki in Canadian National Ballet's 'Coppelia'. —Stephan

scendos, but something is lacking. Not only are the girls' costumes unnecessarily ugly but the usual power and force of Miss Sokolov's comments have not quite come through. But this was a first performance. The Sokolov "genius" will have rectified this by the time the program is presented next summer at the Connecticut Dance College where the Theater Dance Group are to be guest performers.

☆ ☆ The Henry Street Settlement Playhouse is noted for encouraging dancers and choreographers in their experiments with new forms. Last Sunday the Playhouse presented a group of fourteen dancers in the works of three choreographers: Lee Becker, Ellida Greya and Muriel Topaz.

Miss Becker contributed six numbers and danced in most of them, ably assisted by Jacqueline Walcott and John Foster. She has a remarkably pleasing personality, technical skill and a good sense for comedy. Her compositions, in a humorous Blues vein, are clear, clever and well built. KABUKI MAMBO, a whimsical pseudo Japanese duet with John Foster was delightful and THE FIGHT in which she and Mr. Foster "slug it out for four rounds" was riotously funny, good entertainment as well as extraordinary dancing.

Ellida Geyra's two works, AND THEY SHALL SEEK, based on a biblical quotation, and MORNING; both danced by a group of eight; were hazy, uncertain and alas, not very promising.

On the other hand, Muriel Topaz' THE INNOCENTS, based on THE TURN OF THE SCREW by Henry James to music by A. Shoenberg, is a strong, well constructed work, stirring and vital. Sallie Holroyd was brilliant as the loving, over-protective governess battling heroically to keep her "Innocents" from the Phantoms

Anneliese Widman and Jack Moore in Anna Sokolow's 'Poem'. —Stephan.

of the world. Miss Topaz' second work, PHAEDRA, to music by Jacob Druckman, while startlingly beautiful at times, was too long and not always clear. Perhaps Sandra Olin is not strong enough for the role of that tragic Grecian queen, but Lenore Latimer, as the Nurse, is powerful in sustaining the strange suspense which builds into the death scene. Miss Topaz is a choreographer of unusual dramatic scope and great promise.

☆ ☆ Emy St. Just, with her company of dancers gave a program of unusual interest at the Hunter College Auditorium. Her appearances are not frequent, but always stirring, provocative, highly distinctive. She is not easily described, belonging to no definite school. Her style and movements grow out of the subject and bring a conviction of deep sincerity.

IN REQUIEM AT AN OFFICE WINDOW, Miss St. Just is a secretary lost in fantasy who dances her memories, hopes and dreams while a voice off-stage, like a stream of consciousness, accompanies her. It was strangely poignant and highly original

but was considerably hampered by a faulty public address system which made the words unintelligible.

A THOUSAND AND ONE NIGHTS, to recorded guitar music by Rodriguez, Orbon and De Falla, is a strange episode in a harem where the favorite falls victim to a compulsive sensual attraction towards a eunuch attendant and his unholy glee in robbing her and trying to usurp her womanhood. Emy St. Just was magnificent as the harem favorite and Paul Olson's performance as the eunuch was amazing. It is sordid, passionately evil with the inevitability of real tragedy.

The highlight of the evening was THOUGHTS AND REMEMBRANCES, to music by Gluck. It is the tale of HAMLET seen through Ophelia's eyes. The gentle, confused girl sees Hamlet, his father, mother and the step-father as jerky puppets playing their mad drama on a small stage which she watches with child-like fascination. Little by little, they pull her into their drama, engulf her — it is more than she can bear, so she escapes in death.

Miss St. Just is unique in her depth of perception and her ability to express it clearly in her dance creations. Her personal charm and beauty also contribute to making a profoundly pleasing performance.

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LONDON FOOTNOTES

by

PETER CRAIG-RAYMOND

LONDON

There is still no definite date for Sadler's Wells production of Petrouchka, the famous Diaghilev ballet. That this will rival last year's Firebird revival is certain. But when? Meanwhile Margot Fonteyn has danced her Butterfly solo, by Frederick Ashton, which was premiered in Spain Her costume for this ballet was by Christian Dior, by the way.

New ballet books here include Sadler's Wells ballet master John Hart's "Ballet and Camera", a new collection of photographs; a fifth volume by Serge Lido of Paris; "Predilections" by Marianne Moore contains an essay on Ann Pavlova, and a collection of pieces about Pavlova appear in A. H. Frank's "Pavlova".
Eight soloists of the Danish Royal Ballet flew from Copenhagen for a BBC-TV telecast here. This company, whose very successful season in London I reviewed last year in **Dancing Star,** are held in high, deserved esteem and I believe Huok is arranging an American tour.

With Anton Dolin's Festival Ballet back in town, John Gilpin and Anita Landa made a rare appearance on television, this time on ATV in the "Sunday Night at the London Palladium" show. Choosing an unexpected, but suitable to the huge audience, pas de deux from "Esmeralda", Gilpin and Anita danced superbly well. The effect of the enthusiastic non-ballet audience upon their work was very noticeable. A very successful appearance.

May I put in a word of support for James Selva's excellent promotional idea, his "Dancer's Notebook". I have just received a set of these, and I should think this will rate as the finest piece of public relations yet instigated by a manufacturer allied to ballet. Not only good busines, but excellent and well-designed reading, too.

For five years the Edinburgh Festival in Scotland has been trying, hoping to win the Bolshoi Ballet as star guest. Now it seems that Covent Garden might well get the Bolshoi at first try —by offering Moscow the Sadler's Wells Ballet in exchange.

How close a connection there will be to the Sadler's Wells story in the movie "Ballet Story" to be made by independent Hollywood producer John Farrow for RKO release, I don't know. But one of the Wells governors has been approached already, and there are other moves. This, of course, is the Wells' gala year — twenty-five years old! And how better celebrate than by keeping firm the nightly announcement: sold right out.
Coinciding with the first night of the new short ballet for Margot Fonteyn, LaPeri, the daily News Chronicle here is to serialize a biography of Fonteyn by Elizabeth Franks.

We are badly serviced in Britain with well-referenced discographies of ballet music. I think I can claim to have started the interest in this field when I brought the need for discographical information into an article for an early

issue of Ballet Today, years before I redesigned the magazine and became editor. Not much has been done, though. EMI (the owners of Capitol, HMV, Parlophone, Columbia, Clef, Regal Zonophone, MGM and Cetra licenses here) have just issued a rather sad pamphelt "Niights at the Ballet" which does not go far to fill the lack. The discrepancies are not only odd, but rather obvious even in a cursory examination. Still, it is a start. I hope a really well-documented, thorough discography will soon be available. (RCA issue the HMV recordings in the U.S.)

Oddest book in some time is "Ballet Carnival — A Companion to Ballet" published here by Arco at three dollars and probably becoming available in the United States through the U.S. office at 480 Lexington Avenue, New York, 17.

Odd in its choice of people to biographize, ballets to plot. For one quick example — no Belinda Wright among the biographies, yet half a page devoted to a French monk-author, Thoinot Arbeau who lived in the 1500s! Although designed for young people, no Leslie Caron, yet a section on Celia Franca! Jerome Robbins has his career suspended in 1952. Toumanova since 1950 is left vaguely with a single tour and a few guest appearances in England! No cast lists or full credits are given the ballets covered.

Am I being over-critical? Yes — on the basis the book boasts on its cover: "Everything you ever wanted to know about the world of ballet will be found in this magnificent book . . . ."

Carnival, yes. Complete: far, far from it. • • • •

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THE BALLET RUSSE DE MONTE CARLO IN SAN FRANCISCO

Behind the success or failure of every balletic organization stands its artistic policy. There is nothing connected with such a group which is not vastly affected by this policy of purposes and aims. Nothing clarifies and exemplifies this point negatively as much as the Ballet Russ de Monte Carlo as it stands among ballet organizations today.

Someone once suggested to me that the wake of Sergi Diagelieff would never end as long as ballet persisted. Let us hope not, particularly since the very core of the Russe problem seems to stem from what is by now a very old argument: should the Diagelieff tradition be carried on or should new directions be discovered? ?

The troublesome history of all these groups which have in one way or another desired a relationship at least in name with the Russian ballet of Diagelieff is still very much in the making. And while the conflicts persist, groups such as the The Sadler's Wells Ballet and the New York City Ballet grow and develop with great and rewarding brilliance.

The Sadler's Wells has become for its achievements in the classical idiom; it has become a vital and energetic museum of the ballet in the contemporary world. It does not merely, at its best, reproduce the past; it vitalizes it and renews it with each successive production. The New York City Ballet has, for the most part, chosen to expend its energies in the field of modern ballet, taking onto itself the responsibility of novelty and experimentation. It is not in the least important to decide which direction is more important. It is only important to know that both organizations are achieving things with artistic purpose in the ballet.

What is most distressing about The Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo is that it seems in manner to lack the artistic purpose which has stimulated and maintained the progress of the world's major ballet companies. Its dedication to the past is only a static ideal; rehashing old works which, in almost every instance, possess nothing of the freshness of insight which we should expect progress would bring to twentieth century interpreters. In most instances, for that matter, it is a question as to whether half of the history of ballet as the Russe sees it is really worthy of being perpetuated in the state of decadence which has, through forgetfulness and abuse, dislocated whatever value many early Diagelieff ballets originally possessed. And, as a matter of fact, we must not really attribute to the Ballet Russ de Monte Carlo the position as the beneficiary of the golden age of ballet, for their repertory displays every sort of artistic paradox imaginable: the old, the theatrically new, the abstract and the pantomimic. Neither the tradtional nor the novel are fit within the policies of the Russe company with any sustaining or authoritative command.

The deficiencies of this company are particularly chronic because they have so direct a relationship to the very core and structure of the organization. Audiences as a whole were dissatisfied, I should say, because they sensed this fundamental ambiguity of intent. Beyond such classics as Giselle, Swan Lake (act II) and popular works such as "Gaite Parisienne," the repertory is crowded with what a student might be

Alicia Alonso in 'Giselle'.

tempted to call astounding show pieces, but which, I fear, anyone seriously interested in ballet as a performing art would call a technical recital. "Pas de Trois Classique" is the perfect example of ballet totally uninspired and artless. Though Alan Howard was able to surmount the dullness of steps and display himself as a vigorous and youthful dancer, his two lady companions were as tedious and dull as the costumes of Castillo and the music of Minkus. Mr. George Balanchine who is credited with choreography, is not the Balanchine we enjoy in the New York City Ballet Repertory; I must suspect that Michel Katcharoff, mentioned for staging, is to no small extent responsible for much of the tedium.

The valuable platitude which the Russe company brings to mind is concerned with the fact that ballet technique, like the technique of all the arts, is learned and mastered not as a thing in itself but as a basis and vehicle for expression. With but rare exceptions, technique for the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo, when it is up to professional standards, is employed with an emptiness and detachment.

For this reason it is lamentable to see such fine artists as Alonso, Franklyn, Youskevitch, Novacka Tyven, Chauteau, Howard, Moreno and Baylis fighting their way through works which do not truly offer them the opportunity of using their artistic abilities. Whatever joy comes of these performances, it would seem to me, grows only from the long respected capacities of its sic:

Dancers Yvonne Chouteau (center dancer unidentified) and Nina Novak, observe from backstage at Ballet Russe's recent San Francisco performance.
—Bill Cogan

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This, no doubt, is why Giselle remains an impressive work . . . were it not for Alicia Alonso's impassioned performance, I hardly dare think what the fate of this pantomimic warhorse of ballet might be.

Giselle is not, let me immediately state, merely negative in its interest; nor does it live solely because it gives a talented dancer-actress an opportunity to display her greatest abilities. It is recognizably a milestone in ballet culture and remains, partly, because of its individual if only momentary artistic perfection and, partly, because it owns an important place in the museum of ballet. Were its strong points more completely realized in the Russe production and were its modern staging capable of avoiding poorly constructed settings and trivial costuming, then this ballet might appear more worthy of its age and tradition. As presented, however, in this season in San Francisco by the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo, it only gave us reason to applaud the progress which ballet has made since its early creation. It is particularly agreeable to realize how the styles of overt and generalized pantomime have been replaced by the choreographer's insight into movements which are in themselves expressions of emotion, plot and characterization. All in all, I cannot help but point out that Giselle with all its potentials for bathos, poor introduction and intolerable naivity seems to sum up the entire mode of the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo.

When ability, financing and abundant audience interest are all on the side of a ballet company, it is particularly alarming to know that it can still cling to an attitude and an old, old battle which literally destroys its very potential of significance. There is nothing wrong with the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo which a forthright and intelligent artistic policy would not cure. However, with things as they stand and, for that matter, as they have stood over the past ten years, it is doubtful whether the directors can ever bury Diagelieff once and for all and forget about the Russian Ballet Era of the "fabulous" Sergei Diagelieff in order to do something about creating ballets instead of sustaining a past which has a good many likely reasons for being forgotten.

PAUL DRAPER

I must admit that Mr. Draper's performance in San Francisco represented the first time I have seen this dancer in a good many years. And I believe that

Paul Draper

no experience in the dance theatre has surprised me quite so much, because Paul Draper seemed like a very different performer than my memory pictured him.

The last ten years have seen a great deal of change in the entire idea of popular dancing. To no little extent this alteration of intent and method was brought about by Agnes de Mille and Jerome Robbins, two artists who gave to the musical theatre what might be called a seriousness of purpose and the experience of both the world of ballet and modern dance. During this period of transition from popular dance of little imagination and great activity to our present era of subtleties and grand theatricality, every dancer involved in the field of entertainment for its own sake has felt an influence caused by demands of what appears to be a developed sense of cultural sophistication in the general public. The films gave us "The Red Shoes" and "The Tales of Hoffman" in England; while in America Jack Cole and Gene Kelly were making dance something very different from what it was in the days of Fred Astaire.

I don't know why it exactly didn't occur to me that Paul Draper would also feel the new climate of popular dance in America. His program at the Curran in San Francisco, displayed a quality of novelty and theatrical cleverness which I truly did not expect. Far from being the traditional personification of a hoofer, Draper created an engaging

'I understand they're a dance team'.

program of light "dramatizations" with an original Chaplineque sort of sentiment and humor. His use of general gesture, mime and balletic derivatives was altogether refreshing and entertaining. A large measure of regard and gratitude for what was fundamentally a fine afternoon in the theatre goes to Mr. Draper's accompanist, who managed to draw the audience into the performance with quite remarkable improvizations and general good musicianship. All in all, this department hopes to see Paul Draper back in our San Francisco popular theatre again very soon.

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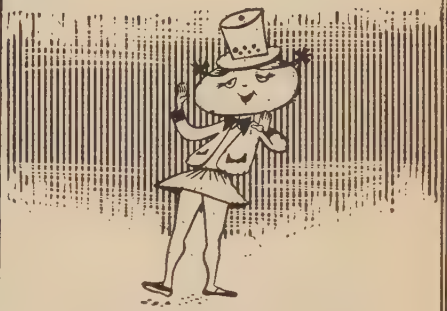

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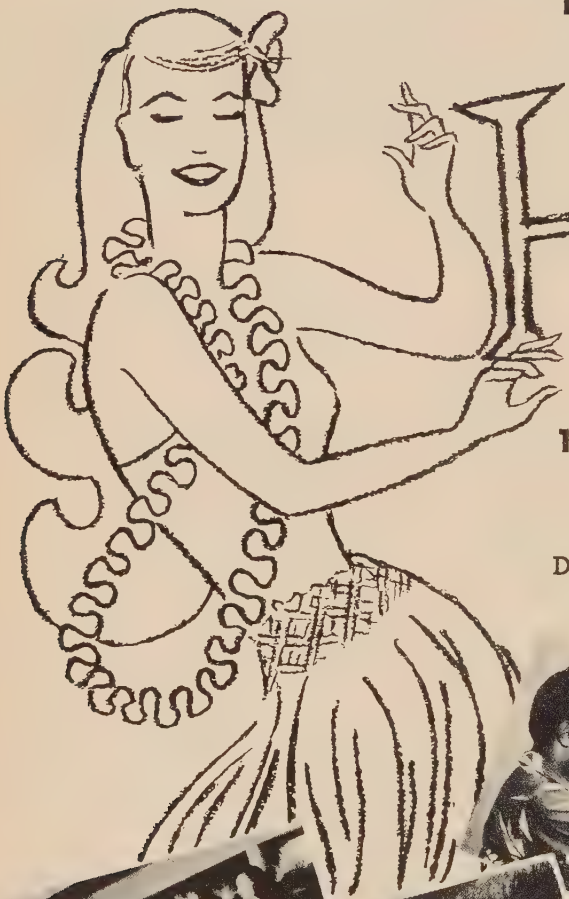

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MANHATTAN DANCE PAS
By Scotti D'Arcy

Recently in the we small hours when great thoughts bare themselves we were discussing at great lengths "Dancing Teaches Grace and Poise" (Dance Lines, December, 1955) regarding the influence of dancing in an actor's life. Nancy Malone, one of Broadway's and Television's finest actresses came up with some interesting and constructive observations. Nancy told us: "A Pavlova I'll never be, but my ballet background gives me the essentials a good actress needs. Poise, stage presence and an excellent means of perfecting pantomime and timing. I have always been able to utilize my ballet training into my work in the theatre. It gives depth needed for profound expression and in tense scenes has come to my rescue many times. Until the age of thirteen my summit was to be a ballerina but a fall resulted in a serious knee injury and the doctor's order, 'No Dancing.' Recently I returned to class because I enjoy dancing and my teacher Orset Sergievski is the greatest." Nancy was seen during the month of February in starring roles on raft's Theatre's production of "Bobbie" and ABC's Star Tonight production of "The Thing That Never Happened."

Agnes de Mille's, February 26 OMNIBUS excursion into the world of ballet from the seventeenth century to the present was superb. She used as demonstrators: ensemble dancers, soloists and stars from several companies. Her analysis of the dancer's body, techniques and styles of the past, various concepts of the art, and the revolutions and evolutions which keep ballet alive and ever golden

Tanaquil Le Clercq and Andre Eglevsky in New York City Ballet's 'Roma'.

. . . was forty minutes of advancement of the dance via television. Miss de Mille moved from scene to scene explaining with candor the beauty of ballet. She also danced for her reviewers, recreating the performing art of La Camargo, outstanding ballerina of the eighteenth century. Excerpts from "Swan Lake" was danced by Diana Adams and Andre Eglevsky. Mary Ellen Moylan represented Marie Taglioni, who was to my knowledge the first ballerina to dance on point. We saw young girls stretching at the ballet barre. Vladimir Dokoudovsky, William Weslow, James Jamieson and Helen Wood appeared on the screen in an assortment of leaps, multiple and single pirouettes and fouettes; as Miss de Mille explained the action of traditional ballet. Contemporary ballet was not neglected. James Mitchell and Gemze de Lappe were excellent in the pas de deux from Broadway's musical, "Paint Your Wagon" choreographed by Miss de Mille. It was nice to see a glimpse of "Les Sylphides" and of course no program starring Miss de Mille would be complete

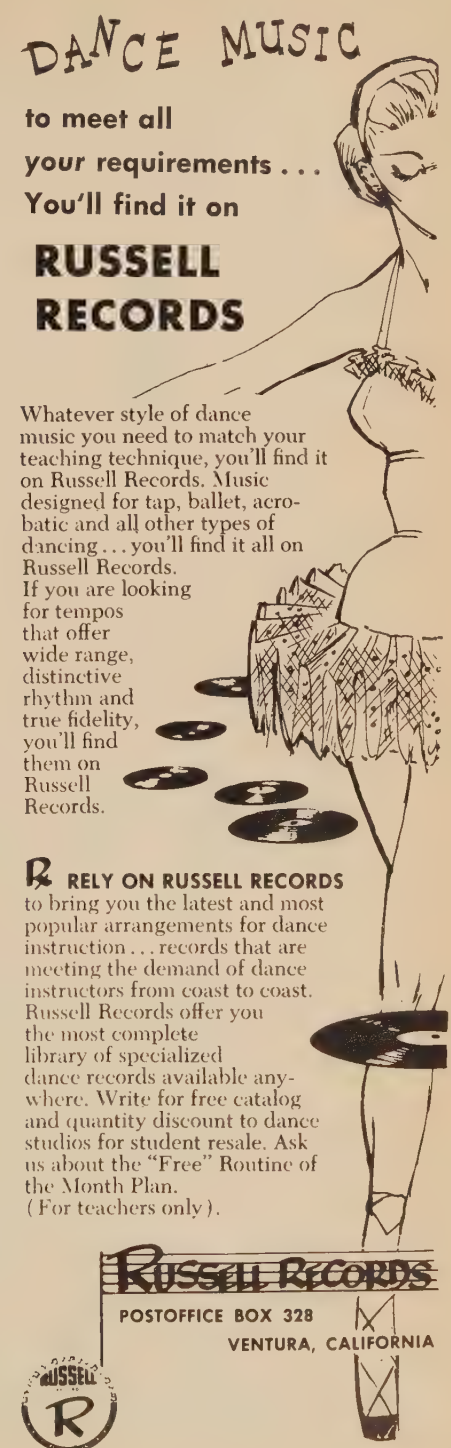
without "Oklahoma" being represented. The camera work, direction and selection of material was handled with great skill and a special bouquet for the genius of Agnes de Mille.

Ballet Theatre's three-week season opens at the Metropolitan April 17th. Scheduled premieres are Agnes de Mille's, "Rib of Eve," Jean Babilee's "Balance A Trois" and "Ofenbach In The Underworld," the new production by Anthony Tudor. Other Tudor revivals include "Dim Lustre" and "Undertow" and an all Tudor evening is scheduled. Miss de Mille also plans to revive her "Tally Ho."

April and May is Broadway's month for musicals. Pearl Primus is providing the African dances for "Mister Johnson" which opens April 2nd. The Winter Garden will house "Strip For Action" as of April 12th, choreographed by James Starbuck. "The Ziegfield Follies" with dance creations by Jack Cole featuring Carol Haney and Matt Mattox opens in May. City Center plans to revive "Kiss Me Kate," "The King And I" and "Carmen Jones" this spring.

Sophie Maslow and Anna Sokolow are joining forces to present three Saturday night concerts at the 92nd Street YMHA. April 14th Anna Sokolow's Theatre Dance Company will present "Poems" and "Rooms". April 21st Sophie Maslow will offer two premieres. Miss Maslow and Miss Sokolow will share the April 28th program.

Vincent Escurdero and Company make their night club debut in the plush Persian Room of New York's Plaza Hotel April 5th. ➤➤➤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January 27th we attended the single performance of Tanec, the Yugoslav National Folk Ballet at Carnegie Hall prior to a national tour. The company was formed in 1949 and for the past few years has been enjoying successful tours of the Continent, England, Israel and Egypt. Tanec is Macedonian and there is something of antiquity about this Ethnic dancing. The music is far from conventional, ranging from the accordion to the reed pipe resembling the instrument of the ancient Greek Shepherd . . . a horn called zourla, drums, a mandolin type instrument which I believe is called tambouritsu to the **Balkan bagpipes.** The costumes were striking and the range of dance amazing. The fast footwork, extraordinary leaps, balances and precision of the male dancers was a nation speaking through its artistic achievement.

The New York City Ballet opened a four-week session at City Center February 28th. No new works dominated the opening; however, a well rounded program was presented and danced brilliantly. The evening started off in a classic mood with George Ballanchine's "Swan Lake", with stars Maria Tallchief and Andre Eglevsky. Followed by Jerome Robbins' "The Cage" expertly danced by Tanaquil Le Clercq. A delightful ten minutes was spent with Patricia Wilde, Diana Adams and Melissa Hayden in "Valse Fantaisie", Ballanchine's dance arrangement of the Glinka tunes. The evening concluded with Balanchine's "Bourree Fantasque" which showed off many of the company's younger dancers. The March 1st premiere of "Allegro Brilliante", a new pas de deux created by Banachine for Nicholas Magallanes and Maria Tallchief was danced to the single existing movement of Tchaikovsky's unfinished Third Piano Concerto. "Allegro Brilliante" replaced Jerome Robbins' "Variations" from "The Guests," an

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older ballet in the company's repertory which Mr. Robbins was unable to stage because he preferred to devote his entire rehearsal efforts to his new creation, "The Concert." This is a comedy ballet set to the music of Chopin and the world premiere is scheduled for March 6th. Audience reaction to "Allegro Brillante" was strong enough to force Balanchine to join the principals on stage for a bow. The balance of the first week's programs included among others: Maria Tallchief's brilliant "Firebird." For those who prefer ballet with a story, "Roma," one of Balanchine's most exciting creations, was danced by Tanaquil Le Clercq, Andre Eglevsky and company. "Souvenirs," choreographed by Todd Bolender to satiric music by Samuel Butler brought to mind the spoofing of the twenties in "The Boy Friend" as "Souvenirs" is a 1914 take-

(Page 169)

These swords are real, as is the sword-play. Among the best examples of the barbaric hero-dances are the men's dances—especially this warrior's ritual-dance in the Rusalija....so ancient, its origin is lost in the archaic Greek period. But it did survive to the Christian era and in the last century was performed seasonally as part of a mystical rite of certain religious organizations, when it symbolized man's struggle against supernatural elements.

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Toumanova

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POWER AND QUALITY come to mind as this protege of Pavlova unfolds the many sides of her source of wealth as ballerina assoluta.

MARY BRAN presented Toumanova at the Pasadena Auditorium and Philharmonic in Los Angeles to packed houses. Wilson Morelli partnered her. The complete orchestra was conducted by Constantin Bakaleinikoff. The program consisted of well selected pas de deux, solo, variation and coda; all Tchaikovsky except THE DYING SWAN.

Although the real thrill of the evening was created by the genius of Toumanova's personality, one recognizes also that here we have the most elegant equilibrium and maturity of style.
The perfection point of the evening, was the Dying Swan, there Toumanova floats through the phrases of this traditional solo with flowing sensitiveness and brilliant tragedy.

Wilson Morelli, from Brazil, captured his audience with his vigor, and where his solo gave him the spot light he

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held it with ease. He is a seasoned dancer with good romantic quality.

Juliet, of Romeo and Juliet, portrayed the young teen-age girl with eager mood; this in complete contrast to other parts in th program where the star was poised and fiery. Theme and Variations with choreography created for Toumanova especially by Alexandre Volinin was excellent.

At the final curtain the audience stood in long applause, calling bravos. I saw tears rolling down the cheeks of a woman nearby. The large stage was covered with bouquets of gratitude. One felt lifted — having participated in this exquisite evening.

PAUL DRAPER with ready wit and gay spacious personality, gave two performances to enchanted audiences at Royce Hall Auditorium, UCLA. Dr. Mary Bran presented this unique artist after an absence of almost seven years. Since I last saw Mr. Draper he appears even wiser with experience and less battered by it.

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Paul Draper as artist Steinberg sees him.

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nique that, at times, is breathtaking, the while he completely analyzes his audience.

By the time he announces his DANCE WITHOUT MUSIC he is in the dirver's seat, holding the reins firmly, and in absolute command; ending his program before the first intermission with loud bravos and applauding until Draper simply cannot take one more curtain call.

PAUL DRAPER LEARNED THE HARD WAY.

Born in Florence, Italy, of American parents, he came to this country for schooling. An assortment of jobs followed his school years and he finally enrolled in the Brooklyn Polytechnic Institute to learn civil engineering. He was dissatisfied with the slow progress and accepted a job as assistant music critic on the now defunct New York World. Later he "more or less fell into a time step" he created himself which led him to his first engagement in the theatre. He studied at the School of American Ballet and from Novikoff in Chicago.

Draper expresses himself in a dance vocabulary all his own; his style combines tap and modified ballet movement. He is hailed the world over as the top tap dancer; I don't know anyone even remotely approaching his particular style. Mr. Draper still dances my favorite, SATIRE ON A POLITICAL SPEECH, I wrote about it years ago for Dance Magazine. He brings down his house with TEA FOR TWO, and IN A DANCE HALL, also material from past programs.

Some of his leaps and turns are incredible phrasing of dance dexterity in swift effortless rhythm. The audience leaves the auditorium beaming with satisfaction for having spent an evening in the presence of uplifting perfection.

Paul Draper is accompanied by a fine artist, John Colman. The young artist holds his own with his piano solo. ■

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NEW BALLET ORGANIZATION

The Ballet Repertory Guild with national headquarters in N.Y.C. has recently been chartered by the state of New York. This non-profit membership Guild is the outcome of the pedagogical courses conducted each summer at School of Ballet Repertory in N.Y.C.

Stated in the 'aims and purposes' of the Ballet Repertory Guild are the following statements: 1. to set a teaching syllabus and national standard for its members, 2. to foster, stimulate, and encourage the teaching of ballet dancing and to set up canons and standards of teaching conduct for teachers and schools of ballet, and 3. to foster, stimulate, and further public knowledge, interest and support of ballet, ballet schools and the teaching of ballet.

The Ballet Repertory Guild provides graded teacher material beginning with basic work and progressing to advanced work, thereby providing a goal for both teacher and student. Syllabus sources have been derived from the three major schools of ballet technique—Italian or Cecchetti, French and Russian.

While the teacher is provided with a definite work plan, the syllabus makes use of the best elements of all and allows the teacher individual scope.

One of the Guild's basic aims is to establish an American school of technique which it feels will evolve in much the same way as the Russian school was evolved from the French and Italian schools which preceded it.

There is also a planned program for children 3 to 8 years in pre-ballet training included in the syllabus. Ballet Repertory syllabus represents years of careful thought and experience in teaching children. Begun by Thalia Mara, it is now in the hands of the Syllabus Committee which is composed of Thalia Mara, Hilda Butsova, Arthur Mahoney and Boris Romanoff for Academic Ballet, and a Pre-Ballet Syllabus Committee composed of Miss Mara and Marie Grimaldi.

One of the Guild's by-laws provides for continuous existence of a Syllabus Committee which each year will consider new additions to the syllabus in order to provide for continual growth in teaching methods and material.

Applicants may become members by passing an examination for a Class 1 certificate which comprises the five elelementary grades. The Class 2 certificate will be issued for teachers passing the intermediate examination and Class 3 certificate will be issued to advanced teachers. Additional information may be had by writing Ballet Repertory Guild, 117 W. 54th St., N.Y. 19, New York.

Sandy Devlin, currently appearing in the Broadway show, 'Pipe Dream', will open next month in N.Y.C's Copa. Miss Devlin teaches Modern Jazz at the Jack Stanly School of the Dance in N.Y.C.

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NEWS NOTES....

'MELODY TIME' the Fay Christy show, has been moved up to May 11th at the Oakland Auditorium, Oakland, Calif.

THE BAKER DANCE STUDIOS of Monebello, Calif., are celebrating their 5th successful year of dance-training. Other Baker studios are located in Hollywood, Lakewood and San Gabriel.

MIRIAM MARMEIN recently resumed her N.Y.C. dance classes after completing a most successful dance tour.

DOT'S TOTS 'Spring Capers' were held March 4, at Oakland's Castlemont High School.

THE FISHBACK STUDIO of the Dance in Albuquerque, N.M., held it first Cecchetti Examining Session, Feb. 11-12, with Olga Fricker heading the Examining Committee. Approximately 63 pupils took the First Grade, with 10 taking the Second Grade examinations. The Fishback studios are now busy readying a full length version of Coppelia.

JAYNE MANSFIELD of the current hit, 'Will Success Spoil Rock Hunter' is now studying dancing with Jack Stanly.

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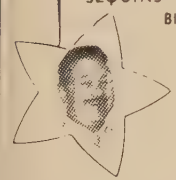

AL MARGOLIN

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BALLET THEATRE OPENS

Ballet Theatre opens a three-week season at the Metropolitan Opera House April 17th. Featured on the schedule of 28 ballets to be performed are two premieres and three revivals. The five novelties are the work of Agnes de Mille and Antony Tudor.

The new de Mille ballet will be 'Rib of Adam', and described by the choreographer as 'a satirical morality play'.

Mr. Tudor's contribution to the season will be highlighted by the premiere of 'Offenbach in the Underworld'. A spicy spoof of cafe society and the can-can, it was performed to the 'Gaite Parisienne' score by the Canadian National Ballet.

Both de Mille and Tudor will be honored by programs devoted entirely to their ballets. The Agnes de Mille night is April 29, and Antony Tudor night is, May 1.

Rosella Hightower, who joined the Company this season, makes her first New York appearance since 1949. Harold Lang is also back and is featured on the roster of dancers headed by Nora Kaye, John Kriza, Hugh Laing, Lupe Serrano, Ruth Ann Koesun, Eric Bruhn, who formerly appeared with the Company as guest artist on leave from the Royal Danish Ballet, is now a regular member of the troupe.

Penny Henderson of the Baker Dance Studios in Montebello, California was recently awarded a coveted trophy on a popular West Coast TV Talent Contest show for her versatile dance style.

HARBERS & DALE, topflight ballroom team trained by William D'Albrew of San Francisco, are currently appearing at the Baur-au-Lac Hotel in Zurich, Switzerland.

THE FIRST ANNUAL Scholarship competition for the performing company of the Contemporary Dancers Foundation will be held April 21st, at 10 A.M. at 2160 Green Street in San Francisco.

Anyone interested in pursuing Modern Dance as an artistic profession is eligible to register for the competition free of cost or obligation.

A panel of judges will award two, full year tuitional scholarships which will afford the winners an intensive program of daily classes, in preparation for membership in The Contemporary Dancers company at the year's end.

The competition is open to men and women from the ages of 17-25 who have not been, or are not now, members of the school.

SOL HUROK has signed contracts for the first appearance of the world-famous Moiseyev Dance Company. This is the first time a major Soviet dance company will have toured the U.S.

The group of 90 dancers will tour for ten weeks beginning in September.

Founded in 1937 by Igor Moiseyev, then ballet master of the famous Bolshoi Theatre, the Company has won world recognition for its diversified repertory based on the more than 3,000 regional dances from all parts of the Soviet Union.

The tour will include Boston, Chicago, San Francisco, Los Angeles and New York.

☆

Pictured above is Gerry Harbin of the Pat Williams studio in San Leandro, California.

Editor:

You might be interested in announcing that male ballet dancing students in the New York City area may apply for posing assignments with us. These are paid, of course.

We produce travel, historical and educational as well as physical culture color slides. At present we are working on a physical culture series demonstrating the role of the ballet discipline in physical development. Dance students interested may write us submitting photographs and physical measurements, age, etc. Only New York City people can be used, however.

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MANHATTAN DANCE PAS
(from page 160)

off on society and its problems. "Fanfare" is one of our favorite Jerome Robbins creations. It is a charming commentary on Variations and Themes by composer Benjamin Britten. Todd Bolender's "The Still Point," scheduled for March 13th, is new to the New York City Ballet, but was produced previously by The Dance Drama Company. Frank Black has orchestrated the music of Debussy upon which this mood piece is built. This is the eighteenth season of the New York City Ballet at City Center and the last appearance here until the company returns from its European tour next November. ■

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THE FIRE-DANCE

By Rosetta K. Wolff

Upon a darkened stage, one
dancer remains,—
A figure in pantomimic veneration;
His undulating body towards the
flames,
With hands outflung, in
supplication
He sways in rhythm to the
roaring fire,—
Imploring Gods not to extinguish
light
In wildest abandon leaps higher
and higher!
Now curling smoke envelops and
blinds his sight,
As onlookers are enthralled with
his part!
He falls prostrate in darkness,
black as night,—
A hush greets the appreciation of
his art!!

Antonio Triana, famed concert Spanish dancer will be seen in 'Serenade' the Warner Bros. picture starring Mario Lanza. Aside from performing an intricate bullfight dance with Sarita Montiel, Triana coached the actress for the entire number. Upper left: Antonio demonstrates a basic step in the bullfight routine to Sarita. Right: Coach and protege take a rest break before going into the actual shooting of the number. Lower: Sarita Montiel is shown in a sequence from the finished production.

Wearing an old lampshade, Carol danced in as a ballerina.

Remy Charlip, member of Merce Cunningham's Dance Company, has written and illustrated a children's book for W. R. Scott, Inc., entitled 'Dress Up and Let's Have a Party'. Dancers Marianne Preger, Viola Farber, and Carolyn Brown, also in the Cunningham group, are characters in the story. Publication date is April 1st.

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Pictured above are Maria Youskevitch, age 10, and Leonide Massine Jr., age 12, along with other members of the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo's Ballet School. Young Youskevitch and Massine danced a pas de deaux on the Herb Sheldon TV show last month. Performance was backed by the new Danny Hoctor recordings. —VI Sladon

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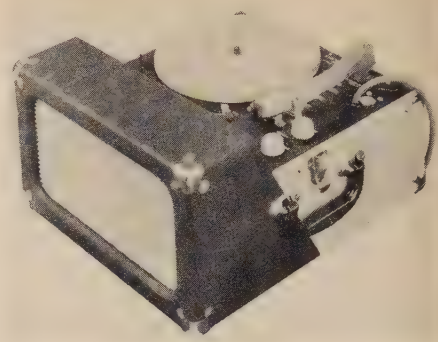

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The new 'Ballerina C-12' by Newcomb affords perfect speed control for either LP's or 78's. This new portable phonograph is especially suited to the dance profession inasmuch as it is light-weight, durable and adoptable to all tempos. (For details see advertisement on page 136 of this issue.)

Members and guests of the Associated Dance Teachers of Southern California gather for luncheon during the association's annual One-Day Convention which was held in February at the Statler Hotel in Los Angeles.

—Kickbush—

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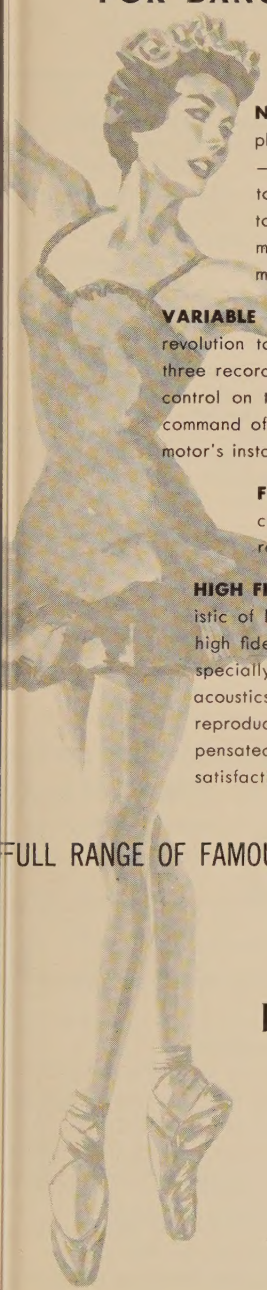
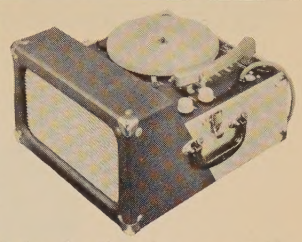
FOR DANCE INSTRUCTION





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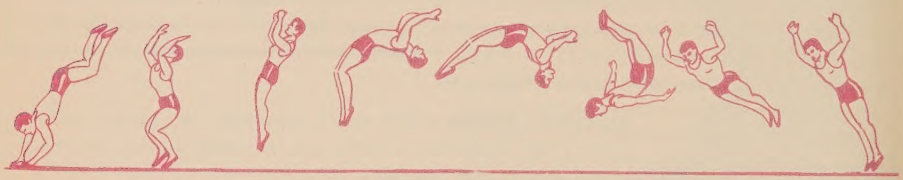
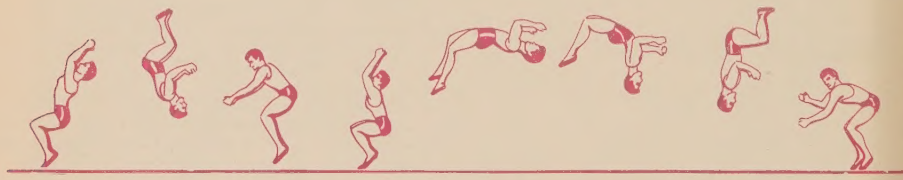


LAYOUT BACK

From a regular roundoff flip-flop back, as soon as the body springs upward from the floor, arch the back, hold back and throw the arms out straight sideward. As body turns over in the air, straighten back and land on both feet as in a regular back somersault. To be effective, the layout back should be as high as possible. Body will seem to float over in the air. This is a beautiful finish for a routine.



SWINGBACKS

Swingbacks are a series of continuous back somersaults. Start the same as for a regular roundoff flip-flop back and as soon as the feet land on the floor, immediately whip body over into another back somersault. A person should always do two or more backs each time. Body must be arched and there must not be any hesitation between each back. Do not draw knees up into a tuck position. Swing backs are similar to continuous flip-flops except that you land on the feet instead of the hands and feet. A belt should be used in teaching this trick.

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by James A. Rozanas, 720 E. 92nd St., Chicago 19, Illinois.

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